

Spring 1-15-2003

# ENG 4300-003: East-West Encounters: A Cross-Cultural Response

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**English 4300-003: East-West Encounters: A Cross-Cultural Response**  
Spring 2003 (TR-2:00-3:15 pm)

Professor: Jyoti Panjwani  
Office: Ch 3576 (316A)  
Phone: 581-3615, e-mail: cfjp@eiu.edu  
Office Hours: TR 3:30-4:30 pm and by appointment

**Course Description:**

Historical exchanges and contacts between the European West and East have led to an awareness and, consequently, to various efforts toward defining and dealing with cultural 'otherness'. In this course we shall examine different kinds of cross-cultural responses that writers from the East and the West have presented towards each other's civilizations. The questions that we will be trying to answer, through the perusal of their responses, are: How is the definition of 'otherness' culturally, philosophically, and politically determined?, What are the oriental and occidental values assimilated or critiqued by these writers and why? How does one culture impose its terms on another or seek to create analogies where none existed before? In what ways do these intercivilizational encounters compel these writers to undergo an evaluation of their own religious, literary, and socio-political traditions and structures. Finally, we will conclude the course by attempting to locate the outcome of these encounters from a nationalistic and a humanistic stand.

The course will be divided into two segments. The **first segment** will focus on the **Eastern responses to West**. The writers included in this segment are: Rabindranath Tagore, Mulk Raj Anand, Partha Chatterjee, Raja Rao, Anita Desai and Swami Vivekananda. The **second segment** will focus on the **Western responses to East**. We will explore the transnational and transcultural circulation of themes and ideas and 'see' how writers of western cultures respond differently to stories/folktales, philosophies, and myths of eastern cultures. The writers included in this segment include Heinrich Zimmer, Thomas Mann, and Marguerite Yourcenar. and Herman Hesse.

**Texts Required:**

Rabindranath Tagore. The Home and the World  
---. Red Oleanders  
Girish Karnad. Hayavadana  
Kumkum Sangari and Sudesh Vaid (eds.): Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History  
Mulk Raj Anand. The Selected Stories of Mulk Raj Anand  
Swami Vivekananda. The East and the West  
Stephen Alter and Wimal Dissanayake (eds). The Penguin Book of Modern Indian Short Stories.  
Thomas Mann. The Transposed Heads, an Indian Legend  
Margeurite Yourcenar. The Oriental Tales  
Heinrich Zimmer. The King and the Corpse  
Herman Hesse. Siddhartha

**Course Requirements:**

One class presentation on a single topic or work- 15%  
One mid-term paper, 6-7 pages- 30%  
One final paper, 8-10 pages: 40%  
Active Preparation and Class Participation- 15%

**Course Policies:**

Class-participation is a very important component of this course. Your presence in class is important for everyone, but especially for you. Each unexcused absence will bring your final grade down by 1%. Three late appearances equal one unexcused absence.

Papers are due at the beginning of the class on the day they are due. For each day that the paper is late, the letter grade will fall by one full grade: an 'A' essay due on Friday will be a 'F' by next Thursday. ALWAYS MAKE COPIES AND BACK UP YOUR WORK!

### **Plagiarism Policy** (English Department)

Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism -- "The appropriation or imitation of the language, of ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one's own original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language) -- has the right and responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office.

### **Information for Students with Disabilities**

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Co-ordinator of the office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

### **Tentative Syllabus:**

#### **Week 1**

1/14- Introduction to the Course

#### **First Segment: Eastern Responses to West**

1/16- Mulk Raj Anand's "The Tractor and the Corn Goddess", "The Cobbler and the Machine"

#### **Week 2**

1/21- Mulk Raj Anand's "The Lost Child", Raja Rao's "Companions"

1/23- Raja Rao's "Companions" and Anita Desai's "A Devoted Son"

#### **Week 3**

1/28- continued

1/30- Partha Chatterjee's "The Nationalist Resolution of the Women's Question" from Recasting Women: Essays in Indian Colonial History

#### **Week 4**

2/4- Rabindranath Tagore's The Home and the World

2/6- continued

#### **Week 5**

2/11- Red Oleanders

2/13- continued, Selections from Swami Vivekananda's The East and the West

#### **Week 6**

2/18- continued  
2/20- Conferences for Paper 1

### **Week 7**

2/25- Conferences

## **Second Segment: Western responses to East**

2/27- Paper 1 due, Heinrich Zimmer's The King and the Corpse, Thomas Mann's The Transposed Heads, an Indian Legend

### **Week 8**

3/4- Thomas Mann's The Transposed Heads, an Indian Legend  
3/6- continued, Girish Karnad's Hayavadana

### **Week 9**

3/18- Girish Karnad's Hayavadana  
3/20- continued, Cross-cultural comparison, Zimmer's Four Episodes from the Romance of the Goddess

### **Week 10**

3/25- Zimmer's Four Episodes from the Romance of the Goddess  
3/27- Marguerite Yourcenar's "Kali Beheaded" from The Oriental Tales, Cross-cultural comparison

### **Week 11**

4/1- Herman Hesse's Siddhartha  
4/3- continued

### **Week 12**

4/8- Conferences for the final paper and the class-presentations  
4/10- continued

### **Week 13**

4/15- continued  
4/17- Student Presentations

### **Week 14**

4/22- Student Presentations  
4/24- continued

### **Week 15**

4/29- Student Presentations  
5/1- Paper 2 due, Theorizing the East-West responses from a nationalistic and a humanistic stand.